Shoreline Restoration

Local governments like King County are encouraged to plan for and support restoration through the Shoreline Master Program. To help accomplish this, the Shoreline Management Act requires that local governments have a "real and meaningful" strategy to address shoreline restoration as part of the update.

Restoration typically means to make an area close or similar to its pre-existing condition. Often this may not be possible or feasible, given the type, intensity, and number of land use changes that have occurred over time. So, for the Shoreline Master Program, "restoration" includes a wider range of actions to improve or retain habitat conditions, including species conservation, as well as habitat enhancement and creation. Protection is also an important action, as the adage, "an ounce of prevention is worth of a pound of cure" is certainly apt for shorelines.

Ultimately, restoration affects two different scales: the reach (local) scale and the basin (larger) scale. For example, recommended actions would differ for a situation where both the local area and context are heavily modified, such as a heavily developed urban shoreline in a highly developed urban setting, than for an area where both the reach and surrounding area are undeveloped, such as shorelines in relatively undeveloped, forested settings.

To assess local conditions, marine, lakes, and river shorelines were divided into reaches based on naturally-occurring physical conditions determined by the landforms. Marine reaches were defined by areas called drift cells, which relate to sediment movement. Once identified, each reach was rated for the degree of alteration affecting a series of ecological processes that occur along the shorelines (see SMP Technical Appendix E for a full discussion). Ratings were then categorized as high, moderate or low conditions, depending on the degree of alteration.

The basin context or regional significance of each reach was assessed using indicators of physical, chemical and biological conditions derived from recent assessments by King County, Washington State and multi-jurisdiction watershed salmon recovery plans, as well as additional information on surrounding or upstream land use (i.e., forestry, rural, agriculture or urban), and the presence of species of concern or high value wildlife habitat. For river and lake reaches, the surrounding or contributing basins were the scale used for assessing context. For the marine reaches, it was limited to adjacent upland areas as drift cells do not have contributing basins. The condition of context areas were also categorized as high, moderate or low in condition.

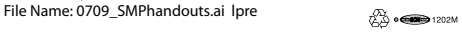
A total of nine combinations and the associated restoration actions are presented in Table 1 as restoration designations. Further discussion of the restoration plan can be found in Appendix A of the draft Shoreline Master Program and maps detailing where the differing designations are found along shorelines of the state in King County are also available **www.metrokc.gov/shorelines**.

Restoration planning is meant as guidance in updating the current Shoreline Program, as well as for future shoreline planners and others wishing to restore shorelines. Aside from this planning effort, King County is indirectly addressing many of its shoreline needs through an active program of planning and shoreline protection and restoration actions for salmon recovery and flood hazard management, the latter focused on reducing flood risks to people and property but having ancillary benefits to shoreline condition as well. King County is also active in providing stewardship and incentive programs to help citizens and businesses reduce the impacts of their individual actions and restore the environment.

Table 1: Restoration Designations

Restoration Score	Basin Condition	Reach Condition	Goals
A	High	High	Conserve, Preserve
B	High	Medium	Restore, Enhance, Conserve, Preserve
C	High	Low	Restore, Enhance
D	Medium	High	Conserve, Enhance, Restore, Preserve
E	Medium	Medium	Enhance, Conserve, Restore
F	Medium	Low	Enhance, Restore
G	Low	High	Enhance, Conserve
H	Low	Medium	Enhance, Create
I	Low	Low	Enhance, Create

Produced by: DNRP GIS, Visual Communications and Web Unit LPRE
File Name: 0709_SMPhandouts.ai lpre



Department of
Natural Resources and Parks
Water and Land Resources Division
201 South Jackson Street, Suite 600
Seattle, WA 98104